

Philanthropy

by Pakistani Diaspora in the USA

Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy
2005

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Preface

The Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy was established in 2001 as a nonprofit support organization to enhance the volume and effectiveness of philanthropy as 'social investment'. The Centre's intellectual foundation rests upon an evidence-based approach contributing to knowledge and societal understanding of the nature and dimensions of philanthropy as a potential resource for social development in Pakistan. PCP's programmatic content and strategies derive from the seminal study on Indigenous Philanthropy conducted in 1998-99 by the Aga Khan Development Network as well as subsequent research undertaken by PCP on corporate philanthropy and on the nonprofit sector.

Civil society organizations including for profit and nonprofit entities are seen as vital partners in the drive for development and the Centre's efforts focus on creating productive and viable linkages between these and other stakeholders. In this context, the phenomenon of international and diaspora philanthropy has become a relevant area for interest and inquiry. Diaspora communities have increasingly become a valuable source of intellectual input and financial contribution towards the development of their countries of origin.

Our study reveals that the annual philanthropy of the Pakistani diaspora in the USA amounts to \$1bn, \$750 million in time volunteered, \$200 million in money and \$50 million in kind. Of the cash contributions \$125 million is faith motivated philanthropy and \$125 million is issue-motivated. There is an equal distribution between giving to Pakistani causes in Pakistan and to causes unrelated to Pakistan. This signifies a desire on the part of Pakistani-Americans to fulfill both

identities. The study also identifies the hurdles Pakistani-Americans face which limit both the volume and nature of their contributions; it documents their concerns and also presents their suggestions for actions to be taken by government, nonprofit organizations and the PCP.

PCP acknowledges the generous funding by The Rockefeller Foundation for this study and the coordination and support provided by the Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. This indicates the seriousness of international interest in the phenomenon of diaspora philanthropy as a financial and non-financial citizen resource for addressing the challenges of under-development.

This seminal study is the product of a two-year social action research undertaken by Professor Adil Najam of the Fletcher School of Diplomacy, Tufts University USA and a dedicated, capable team of researchers who gave generously of their time well-beyond their contractual obligations. We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Pakistani-Americans who gave of their time and thoughts in 56 focus groups across the USA.

The Board of Directors of the Centre and I are privileged to place this report before the Pakistani and American audience as a primary document to inform public policy, citizen action within Pakistan and Pakistani diaspora initiatives in the USA. We believe that Pakistani-Americans are a powerful reservoir of positive energy with a potential that has not been sufficiently tapped to partner in Pakistan's development.

Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha, H.I., S.I.
Chairman, Board of Directors, PCP
President, Aga Khan University

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It takes many people working in concert to develop a product of worth. This report is the labor of many enquiring minds, dedicated professionals, institutional inputs and volunteer researchers each individually making a priceless contribution to the effort.

To begin, I would like to thank The Rockefeller Foundation, USA whose generous financial contribution has allowed us this undertaking. PCP and the Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. jointly initiated the idea of exploring the phenomenon of giving by the Pakistani diaspora in the United States. AKF U.S.A. was instrumental in securing funding from The Rockefeller Foundation and subsequently commissioned PCP to conduct and manage the study. In particular, Mr. Iqbal Noor Ali, Ms. Victoria Waimey and Ms. Patricia Scheid of AKF U.S.A. lent their full support in coordinating the research effort and pressing us forward.

The report benefitted considerably from the meticulous and expert review by Dr. Aliya Khan, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan as the National Reviewer and Ms. Paula Johnson of The Philanthropy Initiative (Boston) as the International Reviewer.

Mr. Mahomed J. Jaffer the chair of the PCP research committee and members Mr. Kamal Chinoy, Mr. Mueen Afzal, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan, Mr. Zaffar A. Khan, Syed Babar Ali and Mian Ahsan M. Saleem provided invaluable, reasoned input and spent countless hours in review sessions at critical junctures of the draft. PCP Chairman, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha contributed his indefatigable guidance and visionary leadership.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of PCP staff in the production of this report: the creative efforts of Ms. Sarah Pervez Afzal, for layout, design and copy-editing; Senior Program Managers Mr. Ahsan Rana and Mr. Eazaz Dar for meticulous review and editing; and Ms. Tasneem Saeed for the proof-reading.

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Authored by Adil Najam, Associate Professor of International Negotiation & Diplomacy, The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University, this pioneering study owes a great deal to his intellectual vision, meticulous research skills, perseverance and leadership of the research team.

Shahnaz Wazir Ali
Executive Director
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A Word of Thanks

This project has been a long, sometimes tiring, but always fulfilling exercise. Like so many labors of love, it grew into more than what had originally been planned and took far more time than I had anticipated. I must begin, therefore, with an apology to all those who have been so patient with me as I struggled to complete this report. I pray that I have not lost all their confidence and that the results of this long process meet their expectations.

Intellectually, this has been an amazing journey of exploration. One that has allowed me to study a topic that was not only intellectually challenging but which is important and timely for a community that I am myself a part of. For giving me the opportunity to conduct this study, I am grateful to the [Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy \(PCP\)](#) and to the [Aga Khan Foundation-USA \(AKF-USA\)](#), which coordinated the study through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. I am especially and personally indebted to [Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali](#), the Executive Director of the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy, not only for her confidence in me but for her constant guidance, insight and patience with me. Members of the PCP Board, especially [Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha](#) and [Mr. Mahomed J. Jaffer](#), were equally patient and supportive and the advice from the [PCP Board and its Research Committee](#) helped shape the final structure of the report. PCP staff – including [Zubair Bhatti](#), [Ali Raza](#), [Ahsan Rana](#), [Eazaz Dar](#), [Tasneem Saeed](#) and [Bushra Asif](#) were helpful in many ways and at many critical junctures of the project. I am particularly grateful for the creative

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This work has benefitted from the wisdom, enthusiasm, ideas and generosity of time of many; too many to mention. To all of them, I am deeply indebted. Even though I hold responsibility for what follows and any mistakes within it, the ideas you see reflected in this report are the accumulated ideas of a community. It is to this community that I owe my greater debt of gratitude.

– Adil Najam

Overview

This study seeks to understand the giving habits and impulses of Pakistanis in USA. We focus not only on what Pakistani-Americans 'return' to their country of origin, but also in the non-Pakistan-related giving practices of Pakistani-Americans. The study covers a broad range of giving practices, including giving to institutions as well as individuals and including giving in cash, in kind, and in time.

The analysis is based on a set of 54 focus group discussions conducted around the United States in 2003-04, an analysis of 461 completed survey questionnaires, interviews with community leaders, philanthropists, and representative Pakistani-Americans, and a review of the relevant literature. This is the first study on the philanthropy of Pakistani diaspora and has yielded a wealth of lessons that are detailed in the following chapters. In this overview we can only provide a summarized snapshot of some of the key findings. We invite the reader to peruse the entire study for a nuanced and detailed discussion of these and related issues.

Chapter #1 reviews the context, constraints and criteria that define the parameters of this study. The chapter includes a discussion on why diaspora giving by Pakistanis in USA is a particularly important topic for Pakistan and for Pakistani-Americans today. The chapter also includes an open discussion of the methodological strengths and constraints of the research. The bulk of this chapter is devoted to an exposition of the demographic and other characteristics of the 54 focus groups and 461 survey questionnaires analyzed for this study.

Chapter #2 focuses on the history, demography and institutional geography of Pakistanis in USA, is based on original research, and adds new information to our understanding of each of these. This chapter provides a new and original analysis of the history of the Pakistani diaspora in the USA, particularly focusing on the growth of the Pakistani-American community over the last half century. The

	Key Findings
⌘	
1	Pakistani-Americans are a generous, giving and active community
2	There is a strong preference for giving directly to individuals in need
3	People are motivated by faith, but mostly give to social issues
4	The philanthropy of Pakistani-Americans is not limited to Pakistan
5	9/11 made the Pakistani diaspora more vigilant, but not less-giving
6	There is significant potential for more giving, including more giving to Pakistan
7	There are serious hurdles that make it difficult to give more to Pakistan

chapter identifies five distinct historical phases, starting with the pre-Pakistan phase and ending with the post-9/11 phase. The chapter synthesizes available official information to provide a systematic demographic snapshot of the Pakistani population in the United States. The chapter concludes, quite conservatively, that there are at least 500,000 Pakistanis in USA; the majority of them live along the East Coast of the USA; New York City has by far the largest number of Pakistani-Americans, while Houston, Washington DC, Chicago and Los Angeles also have very large concentrations of Pakistanis; comparatively smaller but sizeable populations of Pakistanis can now be found in just about every major metropolitan center in the USA.

Importantly, the chapter concludes that while the Pakistani diaspora in America is both young and new (relatively recent arrivals) two groups within this diaspora are of particular importance: (i) a first generation of Pakistani-Americans now retiring in the United States and (ii) a second-generation of younger Pakistani-Americans who were born and/or raised in the United States and now entering adulthood. The chapter also provides a detailed introduction to the very large and wide array of Pakistani institutions that operate in the United States. This points towards an active and involved community that invests large chunks of its time and resources to keep its essential 'Pakistani' identity intact. The chapter identifies five key categories of Pakistani institutions in America that are particularly relevant to the giving practices of this community. These include: (a) cultural identity and civic organizations; (b) professional and business associations; (c) religious institutions; (d) information and advocacy platforms; and (e) charitable and development initiatives.

Chapter #3 presents the findings about the estimated total giving by Pakistanis in America. It is estimated that the total giving by the Pakistani diaspora in the United States is approximately US\$ 250 million per year in cash and in kind and about 43.5 million hours per year of volunteered time. The dollar cost of the volunteered time is approximately US\$ 750 million, which would imply that the total giving by Pakistanis in America is to the tune of US\$ 1 billion per year. More importantly, the time volunteered by Pakistanis in America is the equivalent of 25,000 full-time employees and is a central component of the institutional infrastructure of the Pakistani-American community.

About 40 % of the monetary and in-kind giving is directed towards Pakistani causes in Pakistan, another 20 % towards Pakistani causes in the USA, and the remaining 40 % towards causes unrelated to Pakistan. Our survey respondents report that about half of their monetary and in-kind giving is motivated by faith-based obligations to be charitable (but not necessarily directed towards religious organizations) while the remaining half is motivated by issues that they hold dear (such as poverty reduction, education, health, community development, civil liberties, etc.). Our survey findings suggest that, much like the rest of America, faith is a major motivator for giving by Pakistanis in America. However, much of this giving is directed to individual support for the poor and needy, especially based on kinship networks, rather than as direct giving to faith-based organizations. Our survey findings suggest that Pakistanis in America are as or more generous in their giving habits than their compatriots in Pakistan or their neighbors in the United States. This is important because the community seems to believe the opposite to be true.

Chapter #4 focuses on the trends and

tendencies in the giving practices of Pakistanis in America. Not surprisingly, the chapter concludes that total giving tends to rise with increasing income and with increasing education (the two are possibly correlated). However, lower-income households tend to volunteer more of their time. The level of giving in our survey sample tended to increase up to the 40-50 years range and then declined; however, the amount of time volunteered increased steadily with age. Households that were more involved in Pakistani organizations tended to give more and volunteer more, as did households of Pakistani-Americans who have lived in the USA longer. A clear finding of this research is that Pakistan and Pakistani causes remain a major focus of giving by Pakistanis in America, but a significant proportion of giving by Pakistanis in America is also directed to causes unrelated to Pakistan. One interesting finding is that the overall giving rises with length of time spent in the USA but proportionally more of the increase is directed towards causes not related to Pakistan.

Social issues – including poverty reduction and helping the needy, education and health – are by far the most important issues for Pakistanis in America; this is particularly true for Pakistani causes in Pakistan. In terms of Pakistani causes in the USA, community development (of the Pakistani-American community) and civil and human rights were the highest ranked causes in our survey. In terms of causes unrelated to Pakistan, religion and civil and human rights were the two highest ranked-causes. Our research suggests an overall inclination amongst Pakistanis in America to give directly to individuals in need and an apparent distrust of formalized institutions whether they be non-governmental organizations, educational institutions or religious

organizations. However, our respondents were much less likely to focus on giving to individuals when giving to causes outside of Pakistan.

Another key finding of this chapter is that Pakistani causes – whether they are in Pakistan or in the United States – simply do not ask the Pakistani diaspora for their contributions as often as causes unrelated to Pakistan. For example, as many as 81 % of our survey respondents reported receiving three or more requests per month from causes unrelated to Pakistan; by contrast, only 4 % and 10 %, respectively, report that they are courted at the same frequency by Pakistani causes in Pakistan or the USA. The final, and important, finding of this chapter is that the giving patterns of the majority of Pakistanis in America have remained unchanged since the tragic events of 9/11. Indeed, slightly more Pakistani-Americans have increased their giving since 9/11 than have decreased their giving; and the greatest increase in this period has been in causes unrelated to Pakistan.

Chapter #5 moves the focus of the report towards the giving attitudes and preferences of Pakistanis in America. Our analysis suggests that the single most important giving impulse is the desire to directly help individuals in need. Faith and a sense of community is also a strong motivator of giving for Pakistanis in America, but there is an obvious lack of enthusiasm for giving to educational institutions, except for a handful of prestigious institutions in Pakistan that have cultivated a strong sense of identity amongst their alumni. In terms of fund-raising, nothing is as effective in raising funds as personal testimonials and appeals by friends and family. Interestingly, the means of fund-raising that are most commonly used – including

cultural events, formal fund-raisers, and celebrity endorsements seem to solicit only lukewarm approval from our survey respondents. Equally interestingly, many of the methods that are most popular for fund-raising by US organizations – websites, membership dues, mass mailings, media advertising, phone requests and pledges, and email solicitations – also receive little enthusiasm from Pakistanis in America. This chapter also finds that organizations working in a region that people 'belong to' seem to get only marginal advantage; that the view is mixed on the importance of getting a tax deduction but an organization's having officially registered status in the US does give people a greater sense of comfort; that celebrity endorsement and marketing material seem to hold little importance but the reputation of an organization is a key factor, even though an organization's size is not.

A key message from this chapter confirms the well-known adage that 'people do not give to causes, people give to people'. More importantly, people tend to give most to the people they trust and for the most part Pakistanis in America do not trust institutions in Pakistan. In particular, we find that the Pakistani diaspora in America does not have much trust in nonprofit (NPOs) in Pakistan and a very large proportion of our respondents consider them to be inefficient, ineffective, unethical and inattentive to the most pressing issues that need attention. This perception is clearly an important impediment to institutional giving in Pakistan and needs to be addressed before more significant resources can flow from the Pakistani diaspora to civil society organizations in Pakistan. In terms of the future giving potential of the diaspora, an overwhelming majority of our respondents believe that, given the right conditions,

their own and the Pakistani community's giving to Pakistan-related causes can increase significantly. However, the clear message is that the Pakistani diaspora in the USA has the potential to give more to Pakistan-related causes but only if certain conditions are met: (a) *if* they had more trust that their contributions would be put to good use, (b) *if* it becomes easier to give to Pakistan-related causes, and (c) *if* they had more and better information about causes in Pakistan. Key priorities for our respondents, therefore, include easier mechanisms for transfer of funds to organizations in Pakistan, independently verified information about and certification of organizations in Pakistan, better monitoring of how their contributions are utilized, and having officially registered status in the US.

Chapter #6 analyzes the group discussions in the focus groups and uses this as a means of deciphering community perceptions about giving and volunteering. The chapter concludes that the Pakistani diaspora is a dynamic and philanthropically active community but has within it important pockets of disengaged subsets, including younger populations. The community has a very low self-image in terms of how its own philanthropic activities compare with philanthropy by other peer groups in America (even though our survey results indicate otherwise). The focus group analysis suggests that the institutional hurdles in Pakistan remain a greater impediment to giving to causes in Pakistan than the post-9/11 policy environment in the United States. Indeed, a key impact of the events following 9/11 seems to have been the emergence of a very strong perception amongst Pakistani-Americans that they need to become much more active in US-based philanthropy, even if that means cutting back on Pakistan-based philanthropy.

Chapter #7 concludes the report by drawing out key trends and larger lessons that emerge from this research, with a focus on themes that are of greatest intellectual and practical value to our key audiences: the Pakistani diaspora in America, the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP), Pakistan-related philanthropic organizations that wish to engage the Pakistani diaspora, and the scholarly and policy communities. The chapter highlights a set of seven key overarching lessons that emerge from this research: (1) Pakistani-Americans are a generous, giving and active community; (2) there is a strong preference for giving directly to individuals in need; (3) people are motivated by faith, but mostly give to social issues; (4) the philanthropy of Pakistani-Americans is not limited to Pakistan; (5) 9/11 made the Pakistani diaspora more vigilant, but not less giving; (6) there is significant potential for more giving by Pakistanis in America, including more giving to Pakistan; and (7) there are serious hurdles that make it difficult to give more to Pakistan, these include a chronic lack of trust in the civic sector in Pakistan, practical difficulties in giving to causes in Pakistan, and a lack of credible information about charitable organizations in Pakistan.

The chapter then identifies practical measures that can be adopted to alleviate the challenges highlighted in the study. Identified measures that could build greater confidence in the civic sector include:

- ✿ Creating a trustworthy independent agency for certification
- ✿ Developing guidelines for standard financial and management reporting
- ✿ Developing guidelines for standard impact reporting
- ✿ Investing in a culture of regular audits and transparent reporting of financial

and management performance


- ✿ Better measurement and communication of achievements and results.

Measures identified for the facilitation of easier giving to causes in Pakistan include:

- ✿ Preparation of user-friendly inventories of new US laws and regulation about international philanthropic transactions
- ✿ Facilitation of 'pooled funding drives' for sets of smaller NPOs and organizations
- ✿ Supporting educational institutions in Pakistan to harness diaspora funding
- ✿ Development of reliable and transparent options for international money transfer
- ✿ Acquiring registered nonprofit status in the US by more Pakistan-based organizations
- ✿ Support from the Government of Pakistan in seeking more clarity on changes in US laws about monetary transfers to Pakistan.

In terms of improving the outreach on impacts and achievements of the civic sector in Pakistan, some of the identified measures include:

- ✿ Creating a web-based clearinghouse of information on relevant organizations in Pakistan
- ✿ Facilitating visits to the USA by team delegations of NPO and philanthropic sector leaders
- ✿ Establishing channels of better and more frequent communication to existing and potential donors
- ✿ Targeting visits by representatives around key diaspora events in the US
- ✿ Seeking non-monetary contributions



including knowledge-giving and
volunteering by Pakistanis in
America

- ✿ Partnering with Pakistani
organizations in America.

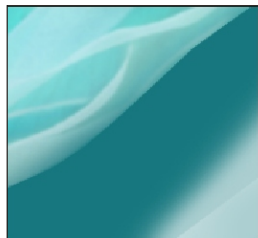
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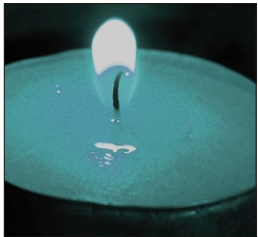
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